

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2003

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6665

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT, PFOR

SUBJ: FANFANI VISIT TO WASHINGTON

REF: A. STATE 91059 B. ROME 5096 C. STATE 91069

1. WE FULLY AGREE WITH THE WHITE HOUSE POSITION REGARDING THE FANFANIS' INTEREST IN BEING RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT AND MRS. CARTER (REF A). WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE INADVISABLE FOR SUCH APPOINTMENTS TO BE GRANTED. SOME OF THE REASONS ARE STATED IN REF B. SINCE THAT CABLE THE MORO KIDNAPPING SEEMS TO HAVE GIVEN FURTHER IMPETUS TO FANFANI'S EFFORTS TO BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF ITALY. WHETHER THIS COMES FROM FANFANI HIMSELF WE DO NOT KNOW, BUT HIS RENEWED OR STRENGTHENED AMBITIONS ARE COMMON TALK IN POLITICAL CIRCLES IN ROME. SINCE FANFANI, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE, EPITOMIZES THE DC "OLD GUARD," HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE PRESIDENCY OR ANY OTHER SENIOR JOB (E.G., PRESIDENCY OF THE DC PARTY) WILL STIMULATE SUBSTANTIAL AND VOCAL OPPOSITION WITHIN THE DC AS WELL AS FROM OTHER PARTIES. IN OUR VIEW, THERE IS NOTHING TO BE GAINED FROM RISKING PRESIDENT CARTER'S BEING INVOLVED, HOWEVER INDIRECTLY, IN THE POLITICAL FIGHT THAT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE PROVOKED BY FANFANI'S AMBITIONS.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ROME 06665 111740Z

2. FOR THE SAME REASONS, WE WOULD URGE CAUTION SHOULD FANFANI INDICATE A DESIRE TO MEET WITH (AND BE SEEN MEETING WITH) DR. BRZEZINSKI OR SECRETARY VANCE. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, SEE ANY OBJECTION (AS STATED REF B) TO A CALL BY FANFANI ON VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE. THIS COULD BE EXPLAINED AS CORRECT IN PROTOCOL TERMS, SINCE FANFANI IS THE VICE PRESIDENT'S OPPOSITE NUMBER BOTH AS PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND AS FIRST IN LINE

TO SUCCESSION TO PRESIDENT LEONE, AND WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE IMPORTANT POSITION FANFANI IN FACT STILL HOLDS.

3. RE SUGGESTION OF PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE IN PARA 3. REF A, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT SUCH A MESSAGE BE HELD UNTIL THERE IS A DECISIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MORO KIDNAPPING CASE. BY TYING IT TO SUCH A DEVELOPMENT, A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE A MUCH GREATER IMPACT THAN IT WOULD AT THE PRESENT TIME WHEN ALL SEEMS CONFUSED AND INCONCLUSIVE ON THE MORO CASE.

4. RE PARA 11, REF C, WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT'S SCHEDULE DURING THE NATO SUMMIT COULD BE KEPT SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO PERMIT A BILATERAL WITH ANDREOTTI SHOULD THERE BE IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE MORO CASE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE OR DURING THE NATO MEETING. IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT AT THAT TIME FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE USG TO CLEARLY AND PUBLICLY EXPRESS THEIR SYMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY WITH MORO, HIS FAMILY, AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT (DEPENDING OF COURSE ON EXACTLY HOW THE MORO KIDNAPPING IS ENDED). GARDNER

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